

Family-Friendly Films Top Box Office in 2007

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(May 6, 2008) Americans made their movie preferences known at the box office in 2007 and chose family-friendly films such as *Ratatouille* and *Enchanted* over atheistic and occult films such as *The Golden Compass* and *Harry Potter* by sometimes huge margins.

“Movies with very strong biblical, traditional values, or capitalist ideals, patriotic ideals and pro American attitudes, do much better at the box office than movies promoting Marxism, political correctness, atheism and sexual perversion,” said Ted Baehr, publisher of *MovieGuide* to *WorldNetDaily*.

In the latest edition of a six year study, Baehr found that 90 percent of the top 10 movies at the box office in 2007 were pro-American films with strong conservative values.

The top money-making movies included *Ratatouille*, *Spider-Man 3*, *National Treasure: The Book of Secrets*, *Alvin and the Chipmunks*, *Amazing Grace*, *Enchanted*, *The Ten Commandments*, *I Am Legend*, *In the Shadow of the Moon*, *Pride*, *The Ultimate Gift* and others.

This trend was also found in a longer list of the top 25 films where 72 percent of the films contained strong conservative and pro-American values. Only 16 percent of the films in this category contained anti-American or strong atheist content with only 12 percent having strong homosexual or other “politically correct” content.

As in past years, family-friendly fare continued to be the money maker at the box office in 2007. Movies with strong biblical morality averaged \$60.3 million at the box office and those with strong patriotic themes averaged \$73.1 million.

On the other hands, films with strong anti-American, atheistic or homosexual content grossed less than \$20 million. Some of these films included *Harry Potter and The Order of the Phoenix*, *The Golden Compass*, *Redacted*, *I Now Pronounce You Chuck and Larry*, *Sicko* and others.

Following the patterns established in earlier years of the study, the 2007 movies with very strong biblical morality averaged \$60.3 million at the box office. Films with strong pro-capitalist values averaged \$62.7 million, and those with patriotic and pro-American values averaged \$73.1 million. Conversely, those with socialist content averaged \$8.2 million, strong homosexuality \$18.7 million and anti-capitalist content \$5.5 million.

Baehr, who produces the most comprehensive economic analyses of the industry, delivered the full report for 2007 at the recent 16th annual Faith & Values Awards Gala in Beverly Hills.

“Year after year, movies with moral content consistently do better - and movies with overt Christian content do even better - than those without,” Dr. Baehr told *The Catholic Standard and Times*. “We get the same results from five year studies, 10 year studies, collateral studies, lateral

studies . . .”

And the same story holds true for television, he said. “What does well are the home improvement shows, cooking shows, Discovery channel, History channel. Channels like MTV don’t want the new Nielsen tracking records because they only have a few hundred thousand viewers and they’ll lose ad dollars because not that many people are watching.”

So why doesn’t Hollywood respond to the people’s desire for family-friendly fare? It does, he says, but it’s a long slow process. “Turning around these studies is like turning around the Titanic,” he said.

When they produce films about homosexuality, violence, or with strong African American or Hispanic themes, they’re just exploiting a small market, he said.

“If they can produce it at the right price they can exploit the market,” Baehr said. “Violent films don’t make anything at the box office. Most Hispanic films peak at around \$30 million. Black films peak at around \$60 million. *Brokeback Mountain*, which was the ‘biggest of the big,’ only brought in \$74 million worldwide compared to *Narnia* which took in \$740 million worldwide during the same time period.”

It’s all in the numbers, he says, which is why the best thing families can do to influence the movie and television market is to continue to support films and television programs that are family-friendly.

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Women of Grace Study Questions:

1) What does the Church recommend we do in order to make proper use of the media? (See No. 9 in the Decree on the Media of Social Communications entitled *Inter Mirifica*, available in its entirety at

http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_decree_19631204_inter-mirifica_en.html)

2) Right use of the media by Christians can result in the evangelization of the world. Why does the Church say it is so important to support these efforts wherever possible? (See No. 17 in *Inter Mirifica*)